Purchase of Boeings for Air India

*470. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT.
SHRI MAHESH KUMAR KANODIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether a decision had been taken to purchase four Boeings for the Air India;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether the Boeings have since been acquired by the Air India;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the cost of these Boeings estimated two years earlier has since gone up and if so, the extent thereof; and

(e) the remedial measures proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure early implementation of the decision to avoid further cost escalation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK): (a) to (e) Government have approved the proposal of Air India for acquiring four Boeing 747-400 passenger aircraft at an estimated cost of Rs. 1962.03 crores. Owing to the exchange rate adjustment, the project cost in rupees has increased by Rs. 600 crores; however, the foreign exchange element of US $667.09 million remains the same.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the date on which the Government approved to the proposal of Air India? What are the reasons of delay even after Government had approved the scheme. Who is to be held responsible for the loss caused to the country due to increase of 600 crore rupees in cost of the aircrafts.

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): Mr. Speaker, Sir, P.I.B. accorded its approval on 14th March and the same was to be submitted before the Cabinet. Since there was a caretaker Government in power at that time it was not permissible for them to take important decisions. On account of this the matter was delayed.

SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, was any decision taken by the Air India to purchase various other aircrafts or Boeings?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, no such proposal is under Government's consideration at present.

[English]

SHRI MURLI DEORA: The hon. Minister has said that the Government is acquiring these new 747 aircrafts. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what is the mode of insurance coverage they take when they buy such aircrafts. We had two major aircrashes—one near Bombay in 1978 January and another on the way from Canada. Have we recovered all the loss of money due to these accidents? What sort of insurance coverage we take? Is it entitled for all the risks like sabotage also?

MR. SPEAKER: Will it arise from this question?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: I require a separate notice Sir.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have two queries. The hon. Minister has already said the approval from P.I.B. was received in March. When was this proposal initiated by the Air India and when it was placed before the Government? Secondly, whether fitting the aircrafts with Rolls Royce engines was one of our conditions for which the delay was caused? Whether the manufacturer, an American Company, made a request to fit some other engines manufactured in the U.S.A. in place of Rolls Royce in the aircrafts?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Air India Board approved this proposal on the 13th September 1989. So far as the engine is concerned the delay was not caused on account of this.

[English]

Subsidised food to villagers in ITDC hotels

*471. SHRI RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme has been introduced to provide subsidised food to villagers in India Tourism Development Corporation hotels;

(b) if so, the details thereof including

the names of the India Tourism Development Corporation hotels where the scheme has been implemented;

(c) the details of the concession offered and the conditions thereof;

(d) the experience gained so far in the working of the scheme; and

(e) whether there is any proposal to review this scheme and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK) (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A scheme was introduced by ITDC from 25.1.1991 offering 50% discount on meals to rural guests in one of the specified restaurants of each ITDC hotel on two days in a week i.e. on Thursday and Friday. The concession is admissible to rural people staying within a radius of 50 kms in the vicinity of the respective ITDC hotel / restaurant on establishing identity through an identity card / certificate, preferably with a photograph, issued by the Village Pradhan and certified by the Sarpanch of the area, or a certificate issued by the Block Development Officer of the respective area from where such guests visit. However, in the case of hotels located in the Union Territory of Delhi, the distance restriction of 50 kms is not applicable, and any bonafide rural guest from any where in India can avail of this facility. In the case of family, the number of dependents who can avail of this facility is limited to 6 members, including the Head of the family. A list of ITDC Hotels where this scheme has been introduced is at Annexure.

(d) 38 Rural people have availed of this facility under this scheme upto 15.7.1991.

(e) Yes, Sir.

Annexure

Statement indicating the names of the hotels operated by ITDC where the scheme of 50% concession on meals to rural people has been introduced w.e.f. 25.1.91.

S.No.	Name of the Unit
1.	Ashok Hotel, New Delhi.
2.	Hotel Samrat, New Delhi.
3.	Qutab Hotel, New Delhi.
4.	Ashok Radisson Hotel, Bangalore.
5.	Ashok Radisson Lalitha Palace Hotel, Mysore.
6.	Ashok Radisson Beach Resort, Kovalam.
7.	Hotel Airport Ashok, Calcutta.
8.	Hotel Agra Ashok, Agra.
9.	Hotel Kanishka, New Delhi.
10.	Hotel Janpath, New Delhi.
11.	Hotel Varanasi Ashok, Varanasi.
12.	Hotel Jaipur Ashok, Jaipur.
13.	Laxmi Vilas Palace Hotel, Udaipur.
14.	Hotel Ranjit, New Delhi.
15.	Lodhi Hotel, New Delhi.
16.	Hotel Jammu Ashok, Jammu.
17.	Hotel Khajuraho Ashok, Khajuraho.
18.	Hotel Pataliputra Ashok, Patna.
19.	Hotel Madurai Ashok, Madurai.
20.	Temple Bay Ashok Beach Resort, Mamallapuram,
21.	Hotel Bodhgaya Ashok, Bodhgaya.
22.	Hotel Aurangabad Ashok, Aurangabad.
23.	Hotel Kalinga Ashok, Bhubneswar.
24.	Hotel Hassan Ashok, Hassan.
25.	Ashok Yatri Niwas, New Delhi.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: In six months' time only 38 rural guests have availed of this facility in 25 ITDC hotels. I would like to know whether enough publicity was not made.

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): I think there was enough pub-

licity - not only the publicity which was done on behalf of ITDC but even extraneous to the efforts of the ITDC this particular matter had widespread publicity throughout the country. Certainly, there was no lack of effort on the part of the ITDC or on the part of other people concerned in the project.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: I had asked in Part (d) of my question about the experience gained so far in the working of the scheme. But the Minister is silent on the aspect. He has only given the figure as 38. What about the experience?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: That is the number 38 in the sum total of our experience.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: If the number is so low, why is it being reviewed?

MR. SPEAKER: This is your third Supplementary.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: I am asking one question after another. There was no Part A, Part B, etc. Though I am a teacher, there is no Part A, B and C, etc.

I want to know as to why it is being reviewed. Why are you going to stop it when only 38 people have availed of that? There is no loss in it.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: We keep everything under constant review. That is the nature of the hotels.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, very few people could take advantage of this scheme. 38 is a very low figure and in case of family, the number of members has been fixed at six. But Sir, one condition is that rural people will have to prove that they belong to the rural area. Will these people bring a certificate from the Block Development Officer or get his photograph attested to prove that he belongs to a rural area? Does not hon. Minister deny the fact that such conditions actually discourage people from availing of such benefits? If such restrictions are done away with, more villagers will take advantage of this scheme.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Sir, hon. Shri Vajpayee has given some very useful suggestions. These can definitely be looked into.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: I would like to know the total expenditure incurred on this scheme including the expenditure incurred on furniture, advertisements and publicity. Further, what were the expenses incurred on the 38 persons who responded to this scheme?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Sir, hotels have various departments and restaurants and they do not maintain separate accounts. Accounts are kept on a joint basis for all departments. If the hon. Member wants to know the detail I shall make a special endeavour to present the same.

[English]

SHRI ANANDGAJAPATI RAJU POOSAPATI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this particular scheme regarding subsidised food for villagers in Five Star Hotels is perhaps a scheme to encourage villagers to come to the Hotels and see what is happening in the Five Star Hotels.

Now, I would like to know from the hon. Minister since rural scheme should be broad-based and should even go to the villages—whether the Central Government will consider giving subsidy to the State Governments to start such schemes in various States.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: There is no such proposal.

SHRI RAM NAIK: The prime motive force behind this Scheme was the Ex-Deputy Prime Minister. When the Government is now reconsidering it and reviewing it, will the hon. Minister take him into confidence so that it can be implemented in a proper way?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: The Ex-Deputy Prime Minister was probably the author of this Scheme. We also want to pay due regards to his feelings and sentiments. On fundamentals, we also believe that a lot of priority should be given to rural areas and those who come from the rural areas. That is why we are continuing this scheme. The hon. Member asked as to why we are not closing it down. It is because we have lot of respect for the rural areas. We would like to give the scheme a little more time to prove whether it is successful. That

would become a formidable task. But I can certainly make an assessment.

MR. SPEAKER: No assurance on the floor of the House on that matter.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BRISHIN PATEL: Sir, I would like to know from the Government whether it is true that any person who is wearing a dhoti-kurta would be treated as a villager and allowed to avail concession on meals. Attired in a dhoti-kurta, a person does not need a certificate from a Block Development Officer because his attire in itself is a symbol of his rural background. Will provisions be made to give concession on meals to persons attired in a dhoti-kurta?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: There is no such provision.

[*Translation*]

Burhanpur as a Tourist Centre

*472. SHRI MAHENDRA KUMAR SINGH THAKUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Burhanpur has been declared as a tourist centre; and

(b) if so, the amount allocated for development of this historical place?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK): (a) No Sir. There is no such policy of declaring any place as a tourist centre.

(b) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Please ask your supplementary.

SHRI MAHENDRA KUMAR SINGH THAKUR: I have nothing more to ask.

SMT. SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Sir, the hon. Minister has given the information regarding Burhanpur. There are many other places in Madhya Pradesh which can be developed as tourist centres. Are there any proposals to develop tourism in Madhya Pradesh?

[*English*]

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK: Sir, if the State Government comes forward and says that such-and-such a place has to be developed we have to try to develop it. I have got a lot of schemes as far as Madhya Pradesh is concerned. But I cannot specify about which the Hon. Member is asking.

SHRI ARVIND NETAM: Sir, the Hon. Minister has said 'no'. But may I know from the Hon. Minister what are the criteria for declaring a tourist centre?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA); I think, the Hon. Members has not understood the answer. We have said, no, there is no such policy of declaring any place as a tourist centre. There is no such policy.

We have things like tourist circles. We also give financial help on the request of the State Government when they put forward certain projects. But there is no such thing as tourist centre.

SRHI ARVIND NETAM: I want to know the criteria.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: There is no such policy. There is no such tourist centre.

[*Translation*]

DR. LAXMI NARAYAN PANDEYA: Sir, there are many places of tourist interest in Madhya Pradesh. Is there any proposal to provide financial assistance for the development of such places and what is the criterion for providing financial assistance?

MR. SPEAKER: Regarding this the hon. Minister has replied in the affirmative.

DR. LAXMI NARAYAN PANDEYA: Which are these places in Madhya Pradesh?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister has said that there are several such places.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: I shall give this information in response to the hon. Member's question although a reply to this question should not be necessary as we are talking about Burhanpur. Still, I would like to inform the hon. Member that the Government has given a lot of financial assistance to Madhya Pradesh. In the Seventh Plan Rs. 2.30 crores were given over a period of five years and this year there is a proposal to give Rs. 2.34 crores.

SHRI KARIYA MUNDA: Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Chhotanagpur region in Bihar.

MR. SPEAKER: No, this question does not pertain to Bihar.